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Animal rights group urges Ottawa to call off East Coast seal hunt

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HALIFAX — An animal rights group is urging Prime Minister Stephen Harper to call off the annual East Coast seal hunt because of a lack of seals.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare says ice conditions in the Gulf of St. Lawrence are among the worst on record.

Harp seals normally give birth and nurse their pups on pack ice, but a lack of ice means few animals have been seen.

Sheryl Fink, a researcher for the group, says surveillance flights are reporting that there is not a single harp seal to be found in the southern Gulf.

The federal government has yet to announce this year's hunt quota.

Fink says Harper has an opportunity to give Canada's wildlife a fighting chance in the face of global warming.

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